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A

SERMON

Preach'd before the

KING,

AT

St. *JAMES*'s.

OCTOBER 13. 1695.

By EDWARD PELLING, D. D. Rector of *Petworth* in *Sussex*, and Chaplain in Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

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Preach'd before the

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PSALM CIX. 27.

That they may know that this is thy hand; that thou, Lord, haſt done it.

THIS Pſalm, it's thought, was compos'd by *David*, when he was wrapt up in difficult, perplexing Circumſtances, by the Faithleſsneſs and Cruelty of *Saul* and his Adherents. The greateſt part of the Pſalm is made up of Complaints, and ſuch Expreſſions of Reſentment as are commonly thought to be direct and formal Imprecations. And admitting they were ſuch, a Queſtion might ariſe, Whether they

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were not innocent in thoſe days, when the *Jews* lived under a Law which ſome have thought permitted them to hate their Enemies, and conſequently allowed them to call upon God to appear againſt their Enemies; eſpecially ſuch Enemies as *David* now was ſo grievouſly entangled by; men of that State, and of thoſe Fortunes, that they were out of the reach of ordinary Juſtice. What could be done in ſuch a caſe, but to flee immediately to God, when there was no help from Man? But the candid Conſtruction of many Divines is, That *David* here did not Curſe, but Propheſy: Nor is it unuſual in the Scripture, eſpecially in the Book of *Pſalms*, for Predictions to run in the Form and Style of a Prayer: And if this be ſo, then *David* did not ſo much expreſs his Deſires what *ſhould* befal his Enemies, as his Belief and Foreſight what he thought *would* befal them.

The next part of this *Pſalm* conſiſteth of humble Prayer and Supplication; the Sum whereof is, That God would ſave and deliver him out of his Troubles in ſuch a *manner*, as that all reaſonable men might be convinced it was God's own ſpecial Work; and that his Preſervation depended not upon blind Chance, or upon *David*'s Conduct, Force, or Courage, how great ſoever his Fortitude was; but upon the Particular Goodneſs, and Signal

nal Power of God himſelf; *That they may know that this is thy hand; that thou Lord haſt done it.*

In diſcourſing upon this Subject, the Nature of it will lead me to theſe Three Things:

I. *Firſt*, To ſhew that there are ſome Acts of Providence ſo Signal and Remarkable, that in the judgment of all diſcerning men who believe a Providence, they ought after a peculiar manner to be aſcribed unto God as his own Handy-works, though done by the Co-operation of Subordinate Cauſes.

II. *Secondly*; To conſider what Acts of Providence may be reaſonably look'd upon as ſuch; or by what Signs and Marks we may diſcern the ſpecial Hand of God in them.

III. And then in the *Third* place, To draw down this Conſideration ſo as to render it Practical.

I. That there are ſome Acts of Providence ſo Signal and Remarkable, that in the judgment of all diſcerning men who believe a Providence, they ought after a peculiar manner to be aſcribed unto God, as the Works of his own Hands, though done by the Co-operation of Subordinate Cauſes. I do not now ſpeak of Miracles. For many Effects *may* be wrought, and in former Ages *have* been

wrought, which either as to the nature of them, or as to the manner of their production, ſurpaſs all the Power of Created Beings: And that *ſuch* Effects are to be aſcribed to God's own immediate Hand, no queſtion can be made by thoſe who believe that ſuch Extraordinary Works have been done. But the ordinary way of God in his Government of the World, eſpecially in governing Human Actions and the Iſſues of them, is to uſe the Concurrence of Inferior Agents: And when not only mens Faculties of Acting are preſerved, but moreover their Natural Powers are ſo influenc'd and rais'd, their Deſigns are ſo order'd, their Actions are ſo directed, and Events are ſo brought about, that Wiſe and Great Things are done after a Stupendious and Amazing Manner; then are they to be accounted the Works of God's own Hand, whatever Inſtruments he made uſe of: In thoſe caſes the Glory of all muſt be given unto God; and we muſt ſay as the Devout *Pſalmiſt* did, *This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.*

Indeed we live in an Age when ſome are ready to ſcoff at Providence. But if God were not wont ſignally to interpoſe, and remarkably to intereſt himſelf in Human Affairs, what reaſon could *David* have had for his Prayer, that God would adjuſt the whole Cauſe between him and *Saul*, ſo that his Deliverance from him might be acknowledg'd

ledg'd by his very Enemies to come from God's own hand; and that God did it, whatever it was that *David* had done himſelf, or his Forces for him?

Or what reaſon could he have had for that Requeſt, *Pſal.* 86. 17. *Shew me a token for good, that they which hate me may ſee it, and be aſham'd, becauſe thou, Lord, haſt holpen me, and comforted me?*

Or, laſtly, What reaſon could there be for thoſe Expreſſions, *Pſal.* 58. 10, 11. *The righteous ſhall rejoice when he ſeeth the vengeance, ſo that a man ſhall ſay, Verily there is a reward for the righteous; doubtleſs there is a God that judgeth in the earth?*

Of theſe and the like Paſſages in Scripture, no tolerable Conſtruction can be given, if it be not granted, That in ſome ſpecial caſes, however ſubordinate Agents do move, the Hand of God in guiding and directing their motions, is ſo plain and evident, that men of ordinary underſtandings may eaſily obſerve and take notice of it, if they will not ſhut their eyes; and that God's Providence in making Examples of ſome, and in protecting and delivering others, is ſometimes ſo particularly remarkable and wonderful, that every one who will uſe his own Reaſon, cannot but diſcover the Hand of God, if he be perſuaded of the Being of a Deity, and that there are Operations of Providence in the World.

But

But the truth is, 'tis a very hard matter to convince ſome people of this; becauſe they do not in theſe days ſee with open eyes ſuch *ſenſible*, ſuch *miraculous* Tokens of God's Hand, as he ſhewed in the days of old, in his Oeconomy and Diſpenſations towards the *Jews*. The Strokes of *Moſes* his Rod in *Egypt*, the caſting up of the Waters into ſolid Banks, ſo that the People paſs'd through the Sea dry-ſhod; theſe and many more Miracles did very deeply affect the outward Senſes of men: And by reaſon there are not now ſuch ſenſible Operations, ſuch viſible Miracles, ſome who are very fond of their Natural Senſes, renounce the belief of a Supernatural Power; others, that cannot be ſo hardy as to deny God's Exiſtence, are ready to queſtion his Providence and Superintendency, eſpecially over Human Actions; and many of us are apt to ſet too mean and low a Rate upon the Mercies of God; nor are the generality of men ſo thankful for them as they ought to be; and all this becauſe they do not ſo *ſenſibly* perceive the Hand of God, as the *Jews* did.

Now theſe men do not rightly conſider, that there is a great difference between the *Jewiſh* State and ours, and conſequently that it is fit for the Divine Providence to be different as to its Quality and Manner of Acting. The *Jews* were a dull, ſtupid, carnal People; and God being to form them

them into a Commonwealth of his own, and intending to found his peculiar Government and Dominion over them; to make them before-hand throughly ſenſible of his ſpecial Care of them and Goodneſs towards them, did moſt wiſely in doing ſuch Miracles before their eyes, as rendred the Belief of his Providence unqueſtionable; and by thoſe extraordinary Works, which were ſo evident and obvious to their outward ſenſes, they were irreſiſtibly led on to believe all God's Gracious Declarations; to hope and truſt in him, and to depend upon his Providence continually. But now the caſe between God and us doth not ſtand after this manner, becauſe there has been already a ſufficiency of Miracles to bear witneſs to his Providence; ſo that there is no need of more for our Conviction; and therefore it would be unreaſonable for us to expect Miracles, properly and ſtrictly ſo called; that is, Works done, as they were of old, either without the Uſe, or beyond the Power of Natural Cauſes. There is not the ſame reaſon for God now to ſhew his hand by ſuch Acts of Omnipotence. There is not the ſame reaſon now for God to exerciſe his Almighty Power by Signs and Wonders of that high nature, to demonſtrate his Providence, becauſe Demonſtrations enough have been given of that already. Beſides, the old, Carnal Polity of the *Jews* is now changed into

into a Government of a Spiritual Nature, adm
niſtred immediately, but after an inviſible ma
ner, by Jeſus Chriſt: Whoſe Exaltation unto t
Right Hand of his Father, and whoſe Power
judging the quick and dead is of it ſelf alone
abundant Proof of a Providence; becauſe
would be impoſſible for him to judge the wor
righteouſly in the next life, or to ſuccour and pr
tect his Church in this, without a Providenc
that is, unleſs he did obſerve the Actions of me
and intereſt himſelf in the Affairs of the Worl
In ſhort, Miracles are not neceſſary in theſe da
to atteſt the Divine Providence; and therefo
we muſt not expect to ſee the Hand of God in ſuc
Supernatural Operations.

However, God hath not ſhut himſelf out
the World: Though Miracles are ceas'd, yet h
watchful Care of us doth never fail. Nor will
follow, that there are no ſpecial Acts of Prov
dence, becauſe we ſee not thoſe Tokens and Sig
from Heaven, which the Children of *Iſrael* ſaw
It is one thing to Govern the World, and anoth
thing to make the World ſenſible of it by Ocul
Evidence. The Chriſtian Church is under a Sp
ritual Polity; and God doth uſe his Power no
as efficaciouſly as ever, tho after a more ſecret an
inſenſible manner. And hence it follows, that th
Hand of God may be, and is in many Events, th
the

they be not in a ſtrict ſenſe Miraculous. Tho they be brought about by the miniſtry of Second Cauſes, yet are they Effects of God's Special Providence, becauſe his own Hand doth direct and govern their Cauſality after a Special, Stupendious, and Amazing Manner.

II. Now that we may be always the more Thankful to God for ſuch Signal Inſtances of his Providence, it concerns us in the *Second* Place to conſider, What Acts of Providence may be reaſonably counted his own Handy-works, tho done by the Co-operation of Inferior Agents; or by what Signs and Marks we may diſcern the Special Hand of God in them.

And here we muſt be very careful how we interpret Events at every turn, leſt we aſcribe unto God ſome things which he hath no ſpecial hand in; and which the Paſſions, Prejudices, and Fancies of unwary people are wont to entitle that Wiſe and Holy Being unto, without ſufficient or juſt grounds. Some things he only *Permits*; as the Sins and Wickedneſſes men *do*; wherein God hath no more an hand, than in upholding the Faculties of Human Nature, as he upholds the Powers of all other Beings in the world. Some things he *Appoints* and *Orders*; as the Evils men *Suffer*, and chiefly the Good they *Enjoy*. And that we may

rightly judge what Good that Tranſcendent Being hath a Signal Hand in, this general Rule, I conceive, is very neceſſary; namely, That we attentively obſerve in every Event, what Evidences there are of Wiſdom, Power, and Goodneſs. For theſe are God's own Perfections; and the more of them we ſee in any Event, the more of God we ſee in it; that is, when a Wiſe and Good Event is powerfully and effectually brought to paſs, we may then know, *That it is God's hand*, and that *God hath done it*.

Now if we apply this general Rule to particular Caſes, methinks all reaſonable and diſcerning men may plainly ſee the Marks of God's Hand, or the Evidences of his Wiſdom, Power, and Goodneſs, in theſe Four Caſes; not to mention any more. 1. When a *Great* and *Important* Good is done; eſpecially if it be done *ſurprizingly*. 2. When a Great Good is done at a very *Critical Juncture*. 3. When it is done by a *Train* and *Series* of Unexpected Accidents. 4. When *Evil* Deſigns are ſo powerfully *over-ruled*, as to be made the *Inſtruments* and *Means* of Good.

1. Firſt, We may reaſonably look upon it as God's Hand, when a *Great* and *Important* Good is done; eſpecially when it is done after a ſurprizing manner. By a great and important Good, I mean that which is highly valuable in it ſelf; as the Preſervation

ſervation of the True Religion, and of mens Lives and Fortunes; and that too which is of great Importance to a whole Community, a Church or State. Such a Good is a moſt worthy Object of God's ſpecial Providence; moſt becoming God to do: For if it becomes him to provide for the Private Good of Particular Perſons, much rather doth it become him to provide for the Publick Good of a whole People profeſſing his Religion. This is the moſt important Good; and God's way is to adapt his Providence in proportion to the Worth and Value of the Object which his Care is converſant about; ſo that as things differ in their Rate or Eſtimation, ſo is God's Care lower or higher in its degrees, leſs or more ſignal. This appears from our Saviour's Words to his Diſciples about their relying upon God for their Food and Raiment: *Is not life more than meat, and the body than raiment?* And, *Are not ye much better than the fowls of the air?* And again, *Are not ye of more value than many ſparrows?* Where the ſtreſs of our Lord's own Argument lyeth in this, That the Meaſures of the Divine Providence are ſuitable to the Nature and Value of Things. To the ordinary Parts of the Creation it is extended in an ordinary meaſure; 'tis particular over men, and more particular over thoſe men who work the Works of God, becauſe they are better,

more valuable, more uſeful than others. And hence it follows, that if the ſpecial Providence of God be concern'd for this and that Man in particular, it muſt be concern'd in a very high and eminent degree for a whole Religious Community, becauſe the reaſons are ſtill the greater and ſtronger; a whole Nation being of far more value than a few Individuals. So that when a Great Good is done to a Kingdom; when the True Faith is preſerved in a Nation; and when the Fortunes and Lives of a People are Providentially ſecured (all which are things of the higheſt value) it is reaſonable to conclude, That there was the Hand of God; eſpecially if that Great Good was wrought by unforeſeen and unexpected means.

This was the Caſe of all the *Jews* in the Reign of *Ahaſuerus*, when that Haughty and Bloody Miniſter of State, *Haman*, upon adviſing with his Friends, was reſolved to get *Mordecai* hanged the very next day, as he had before ſent out Orders under the King's Seal, for the utter Deſtruction of all the *Jews* throughout One hundred twenty ſeven Provinces, upon the Thirteenth Day of the Month *Adar*. Here was a Total Extirpation of God's People intended, and with them the Extirpation of God's Faith and Worſhip that had been eſtabliſh'd among them. And yet on a ſudden the

the King's Mind was changed, and the Execution of the whole matter was ſtrangely prevented, by the wiſe Interceſſion of Queen *Eſther* at a Banquet. The Interceſſion was hers; but the Hand of God was over her, and over the King's heart, and over the whole affair: And to ſhew his hand, what an unexpected, wonderful courſe did God take to preſerve his People? *Ahaſuerus* could not ſleep the night before poor *Mordecai* was deſtin'd by *Haman* to be ſacrific'd, tho *Ahaſuerus* knew nothing then of *Haman's* Intentions. God held the King's eyes waking: That occaſion'd him to call for the Publick Records: In them he diſcover'd that *Mordecai* had done him very eminent Service; and finding that he had not been rewarded, the King order'd him, inſtead of being hang'd, to be exalted with Honour; and ſo *Haman*, the great Contriver of Miſchief, fell. This was an Accident which fleſh and blood could not have dream'd of; and that which ſoon introduc'd a change of the whole Scene: For Queen *Eſther* was heard; her Requeſt for her People was granted; the Letters for their Deſtruction were reverſed; *Mordecai* was advanced; *Haman* himſelf was hanged; the *Jews* every where were allowed to ſlay their Enemies; and ſo their Deliverance was wrought; and all this by unexpected means; by the Diverſions of a Banquet, and by the loſs of a few hours Sleep. A Great

and

and Important Good indeed, and that which was a plain Manifeſtation of the great Wiſdom, Goodneſs, and Power of God, working with his Secret Hand after that wonderful manner.

2. Secondly, We may reaſonably look upon it as a Mark of God's Hand, when a Great Good is done at a very *Critical Juncture*. Calamities are not always foreſeen; and when they are diſcovered it is not always in Human Power to avoid them; and then it is a very Critical Seaſon, when Dangers are not only apparent, but imminent and extreme; when Deſtruction is juſt coming on; when Preparations are at the height, and the Blow is ready to be given. Such a diſconſolate, amazing condition *Jews* and Chriſtians have been often in; ſo that to human appearance no door of hope hath been open, no way left for Innocence to eſcape. Now when in ſuch a caſe a ſurprizing Deliverance happens, and ſuch extraordinary Events fall out, as work that Deliverance beyond mens expectations, they carry with them Tokens of an Over ruling Hand, and are arguments of Divine Wiſdom and Goodneſs, arm'd with uncontroulable Power; eſpecially when the Evils that were ready to come to paſs, were not apprehended or thought of; as commonly it hath happened. For ſo credulous are people of ſimple minds, and ſo ſhort-ſighted are thoſe whoſe buſi-

neſs

neſs doth not lye in Intrigning, (and the world is for the moſt part made up of ſuch) that it is uſual for people to be lull'd aſleep, and to reſt confident of their Peace and Safety, little dreaming of Snares and Death by their Bed ſides. They who are dextrous at miſchief never care that the Dangers they are contriving ſhould appear with a grim and open face, to awaken men out of their ſecurity till it be out of their power to keep the Enemy off, and to eſcape from him. In ſuch Extremities it is the work of God to lay to his hand; and when an happy Turn of Affairs doth enſue, it is to all thinking men who own a Providence a plain ſign of an All-ſeeing and Almighty Superintendent, who watcheth over people day and night, and without whoſe Wiſdom, Goodneſs, and Power, a Reſcue would be impoſſible for them, when evil deſigns are once ripe, and the Pit perfectly prepar'd to receive them. This is a glorious Evidence of God's own hand; becauſe none but that Omniſcient Being can diſcern the whole Series of Contrivances from the beginning to the end, and none but that Benign and Powerful Being can daſh them into nothing, and ſave his poor Creatures; as he did the *Jews*, when the Sentence of their Deſtruction was now ſeal'd; and as he did *Mordecai*, when the Gallows was juſt going to be fix'd; and as he did *Iſaac*, when the Fire

Fire and the Wood was ready, the Knife drawn, and *Abraham*'s hand ſtretched out; and (to come home) as he once ſaved King and Parliament here, when the Match was juſt ready for the Powder. It is the peculiar Perfection and Glory of God, that he is privy to all the intentions of the heart; that he ſpieth out all the firſt formations of miſchief; that he obſerves all the motions of cruel and blood-thirſty men; that his Eye goes along with the whole track of their deſigns; that he is able, when he pleaſeth, to prevent the Calamitous Conſequents of them; and that he knoweth the time when it is fitteſt for him to interpoſe, and to gain himſelf Honour, as he did upon *Pharaoh* when he and his Hoſt were in the midſt of the Sea. And when a Deliverance comes at ſuch a Critical Juncture, in which Death and Ruin follow men cloſe at heels, ſo that of neceſſity there muſt be either Salvation to day, or Deſtruction to morrow, it is ſomewhat beyond the hardneſs even of an *Egyptian*, not to be ſenſible that there the Hand of God fighteth.

3. It is a ſign of God's Hand, when a Great Good is done by a *Train* and *Series* of unfortunate Accidents. For this we need no other Inſtance but that of *Joſeph*. What a long Series of Providences did he go through, which no creatures could any more foreſee, than they could foreſee the End,

End, which God had an eye upon throughout all. God had promiſed *Abraham*'s Poſterity the Land of *Canaan*, and thought fit to tranſplant them firſt into the Land of *Egypt*, there to grow and increaſe into a Numerous Nation, ſo that they might come to the Poſſeſſion of the Promiſed Land all at once, in a great Body, and after a plain, remarkable manner. To make way for their Reception in *Egypt*, *Joſeph* was to be ſent thither before-hand to get all the Power of the Kingdom under *Pharaoh*. In order to this, firſt he dreamed two Dreams, importing that his Father and his Brethren ſhould bow down themſelves to him. To remove him from home he was ſent away into the Field to ſee his Brethren. They conſulted there how they might uſe that opportunity to rid themſelves of the Dreamer; and would have kill'd him, had not *Reuben* prevented it. He adviſed to caſt him into a Pit, and there to leave him to the mercy of ſome wild Beaſt; but the *Iſhmaelites* coming accidentally that way, they ſold him to thoſe Merchants; and they again made Money of him in *Egypt*. There one of *Pharaoh*'s Officers bought him; his Miſtreſs fell in Love with him; and being diſappointed in her Amours, became the means of his being caſt into Priſon. Thence at laſt he was advanced by interpreting ſome Dreams, firſt the Butler's, and then the

King's. *Joſeph being now* in Power, a Famine is ſe
into the Land of *Canaan*. That forced his Kindr
to repair into *Egypt*, and ſo his Brethren fell in
Joſeph's hands, as he had fallen into their han
before. By degrees they became known to o
another; and in the end their poor, aged Fathe
and all his Family were ſent for, and cheriſh'd
and ſo they multiplied exceedingly, till the tim
of the Promiſe drew near. What a Train
ſtrange Events was in all this matter? *Joſeph* obſe
ved how the Hand of God was in it all; an
had he not told his Brethren ſo, they muſt of them
ſelves have acknowledg'd that ſuch a long, co
tinued ſucceſſion of odd *Events*, all of them te
minating at laſt ſo wonderfully in ſo great
Good, could never have been ſo order'd, g
vern'd, directed, and ended, but by the ſpeci
Providence of a Wiſe, Gracious, and Over-rulin
Being.

But the *Jews* have not been the only People fo
whom the Hand of God hath appear'd. Othe
Nations, and eſpecially We of this Kingdom
have with Admiration ſeen it act for us by a lon
Concatenation of Events, which no Huma
Wiſdom could forecaſt or think of. How man
Viciſſitudes and Changes have we ſeen? Wh
Difficulties and Perplexities have we been ſu
rounded with? What Labyrinths and Pits ha

we been in? How dark and myſterious have many proceedings ſeem'd? How diſmally have they look'd and operated? How deeply have we been affected with the ſenſe of them? What Groans have we ſent up to the God of Comfort under our burdens; not able to gueſs where or how they would end; and yet what ſurprizing Joys and Triumphs have they ended in? Which is enough to ſatisfy all conſidering men, that throughout a long courſe (a ſeemingly incoherent courſe) of affairs, an Inviſible and Wiſe Hand diſpos'd and order'd all; and brought every thing to ſuch a Proſperous Iſſue, as cannot be juſtly aſcribed to any thing but a Divine Power, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs.

4. Laſtly, It may reaſonably be thought to be the Hand of God, when *Evil* Deſigns are ſo ſtrangely *over-rul'd*, as to be made the *Inſtruments* and *Means* of Good. In this there is a double demonſtration of God's Hand, and of his Divine and Glorious Perfections; when wicked Contrivances are not only fruſtrated, baffled, and defeated, but are moreover diverted and turned to ends quite diſtant from, nay, contrary unto the purpoſes of evil men. This is plainly a ſtroke from above; when their Deſigns recoil upon themſelves, ſo that what was formed and laid for the ruin of others, at laſt terminates in their own.

It was a glorious ſign of God's Special Providence, which *David* obſerved in the Fall of his and the Church's Enemies; That as *they had made a pit, and digged it*, ſo *they fell into the ditch they had made*; that *their miſchief returned upon their own heads, and their violent dealings came down upon their own pates*; that *in the net which they had hid, their own feet were taken*; and that *they were ſnared in the works of their own hands*. An Obſervation which we our ſelves have to our great ſatisfaction ſeen lately verified here in this Kingdom; our bittereſt Enemies have ruined themſelves by their own Devices; and their Counſels have been ſo wonderfully and providentially over-rul'd, and even when they thought themſelves ſure of Succeſs, that what was Politickly laid for the deſtruction of Truth, Peace, and good Government, in the Event prov'd an effectual means to fix all upon the firmer Foundation; the Contrivers themſelves going off with viſible Marks of Divine Vengeance upon them.

III. And now to come to that which I propos'd in the *Third* Place, What better Improvement can we make of this whole Subject, than ſeriouſly to reflect upon that Signal Hand which from time to time God hath ſhewed for this Church and Kingdom; and impartially to conſider what Expreſſions of Thankfulneſs are called for at *Our* hands,

hands, who have been ſo long and ſo deeply indebted to the Hand of God? Particularly, how thankful to him ſhould we be, for ſaving us hitherto from the Hand and Power of a Foreign Prince, of whoſe Cruelties many of his own Natural Subjects are a diſmal Cloud of Witneſſes. Scepticks may be unwilling to ſee and own it; but all indifferent perſons who have a ſenſe of God, muſt look upon it as God's Hand, upon all thoſe accounts I have now ſpoken of. For,

1. Nothing but a Special Providence, directing and bleſſing the Means of our Safety, could have preſerv'd to us all that is ſo dear and precious in our ſight: Thoſe Fortunes whereby we live; that Liberty which enhanceth the value of Life it ſelf; thoſe Laws which are the peculiar Glory of this Nation, and that Religion wherein is wrapt up the Eternal Intereſt and Happineſs of our Souls. How light ſoever ſome may make of this Conſideration, (for no other reaſon, but becauſe we have not ſeverely ſmarted under the Evils that were coming upon us) yet our Dangers were apparent; Dangers to which all our deareſt and moſt valuable Concerns were expos'd; and the Signal Preſervation of them ought on that account to be look'd on as an argument of God's Hand, to which ſo Great and Important a Good is to be aſcribed.

2. To

2. To raiſe the ſenſe of it yet, we ſhould conſider at what a Critical Juncture this Good was done. At that nice ſeaſon, when an unprovided, defenceleſs People were to wreſtle with a moſt Potent Enemy; when his Hopes were at the height; when the Victory ſeem'd to him unqueſtionable; and we look'd like men almoſt captivated at Home in our own Native Countrey. In this our diſtreſs God that laughed all the Heathen to ſcorn, did with the Turn of his Hand break and diſſipate the Cloud, which hung lowring over our heads; and that ſo ſuddenly and beyond expectation, that We, and our Enemies too, *were like thoſe that dream*, and could ſcarce believe our own ſenſes.

3. Thirdly, if we obſerve how one thing followed another, we may well admire the Special Providence of God through a continued Train and Courſe of unforeſeen Events; whereof, tho ſome ſeemed very threatning for the time, yet the moſt uncomfortable accidents have now turn'd to our great advantage. How long ſtill God will pleaſe to vouchſafe his hand over us, is a Secret hid in the Counſel of his own Will. Succeſs for the future depends much upon the uſe we make of his Providence to this day. If we will not be ſenſible of his Hand, nor be thankful for it, nor be led by it to Repentance, we know not how ſoon thoſe

Judg-

Judgments may be executed againſt us, which were often denounced againſt the *Jews* for their Hardneſs and Ingratitude in the like caſes. However we may be wanting to our ſelves, the hand of God hath not been wanting. Since the time that the Day of our Salvation began to dawn, tho there have been ſo many Difficulties before us, yet by the good Hand of God the main Intereſt of the Kingdom hath ſo proſperouſly gone on, that every day we have the ſtronger reaſons to hope, That God will not only ſave us from the Power of that Oppreſſor who hath been ſuch a Scourge to *Chriſtendom*, but will moreover ſettle us upon ſuch ſolid Foundations, that neither the Policy of *Rome* nor the Gates of Hell ſhall prevail againſt us. The preſent Complication of Affairs is ſuch, that the Hand of God is not hard to be ſeen by unprejudic'd people, who believe the Being of a Deity, and the Operations of a Providence.

4. And what can be a fairer evidence of it to ſtrengthen our belief ſtill, than this Fourth Conſideration, That the Devices of our Enemies are not only rendred ineffectual, but are after a moſt wonderful manner turned upon themſelves? Thoſe Arts which had been ſo long uſed againſt our Eſtabliſh'd Religion, did ſo return upon the Authors of them, that perhaps the Church of

Rome

Rome never ſuffer'd greater Diſgrace and Preju
than ſhe did in that little time ſhe ſtay'd he
And when a Strong Wind carried her Politic
away to their Homes abroad, they went off w
ſuch Infamy, as if God intended to ſtigmatize
brand them, that they might be diſdain'd
hooted at by all the world.

That Good, Over-ruling Hand which God
pleaſed to ſtretch out for us in and ſince that
markable Juncture, he hath not yet drawn b
into his Boſom. Still it may be ſeen in the Hap
Succeſſes which God hath granted unto, and
the Signal Preſervations wherewith he hath ble
our moſt Heroick, Publick-Spirited, and Indef
gably Zealous Prince, whom he thought fit
make uſe of as the moſt proper Inſtrument in
Hand, to Reſcue Three Kingdoms from Vaſſala
and Idolatry. For all which, *Not unto us, O Lo
not unto us, but unto thy name let all Praiſe and Tha
be given, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* To who
with the Father, and the Holy Ghoſt, be all H
nour and Glory, world without end. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

A Practical Diſcourſe concerning Holineſs. Wher
is ſhewed the Nature, the Poſſibility, the Degr
and Neceſſity of Holineſs; together with the Means
Acquiring and Perfecting it. By *Edward Pelling*, D. D.
Printed for W. Rogers.

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